



BY LEN WEIN, PARIS CULLINS & BRUCE PATTERSON

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75¢
CAN 95¢
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JUNE 86
APPROVED
BY THE
COMICS
CODE
AUTHORITY

BLUE BEETLE

FABULOUS
1ST
ISSUE



Don't
miss
DARK
KNIGHT
#1!

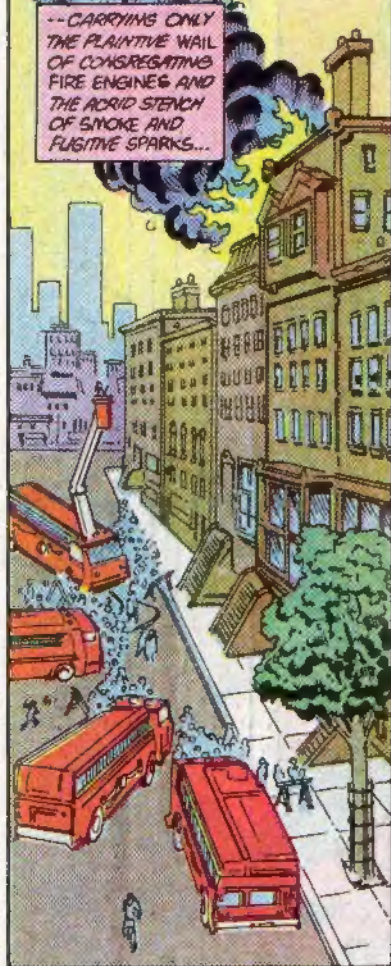


**WATCH OUT, WORLD!!!
THE BEETLE IS BACK
AND ADVENTUREDOM WILL
NEVER BE THE SAME!!**

CHICAGO: THEY CALL IT THE WINDY CITY--

--BUT THE CHILL SPRING WIND
THAT BLOWS THIS DAY BLOWS
ILL INDEED--

--CARRYING ONLY
THE PLAINTIVE WAIL
OF CONSUMING
FIRE ENGINES AND
THE ACRID STENCH
OF SMOKE AND
FUGITIVE SPARKS...



GET THOSE HOSES OVER THERE,
MAN-- NOW!

IT'S NO USE,
CHIEF-- SHE'S BURNING
SO HOT, THE HOSES DON'T
MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE!



I-I'VE
NEVER SEEN
ANYTHING
LIKE IT!

WELL, I
HAVE,
ROOKIE--



--TOO DAMNED
OFTEN LATELY!

WH-WHAT DO YOU
MEAN, CHIEF--??

I MEAN THIS
WAS NO ACCIDENT,
KID.



IT WAS ARSON--
PURE AND
DELIBERATE!

AS IF THIS JOB
WASN'T ALREADY
TOUGH ENOUGH--!

HERE COMES
--ULP--ANOTHER
ONE--!



SAY
WHAT--??

TAKE A LOOK UP
THERE, CHIEF!

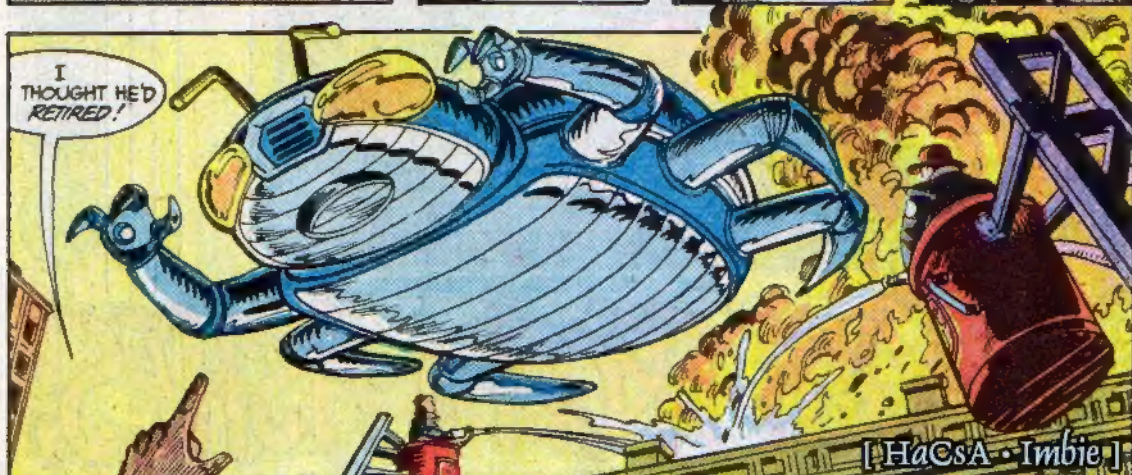
IT'S...IT'S...

HECK, I
DON'T KNOW
WHAT IT IS!



OH, GEEZ...
NOT THAT...

I
THOUGHT HE'D
RETIRED!



[HaCSA · Imbie]

HE DROPS FROM THE HEART OF HIS STRANGELY-SHAPED CRAFT LIKE A BOLT OF AZURE FURY, RIPPLING MUSCLES
BLUNCHED TIGHT BENEATH BRIGHT CLOTH, FIERCE EYES NARROWED BEHIND GLEAMING GOLDEN GOGGLES...

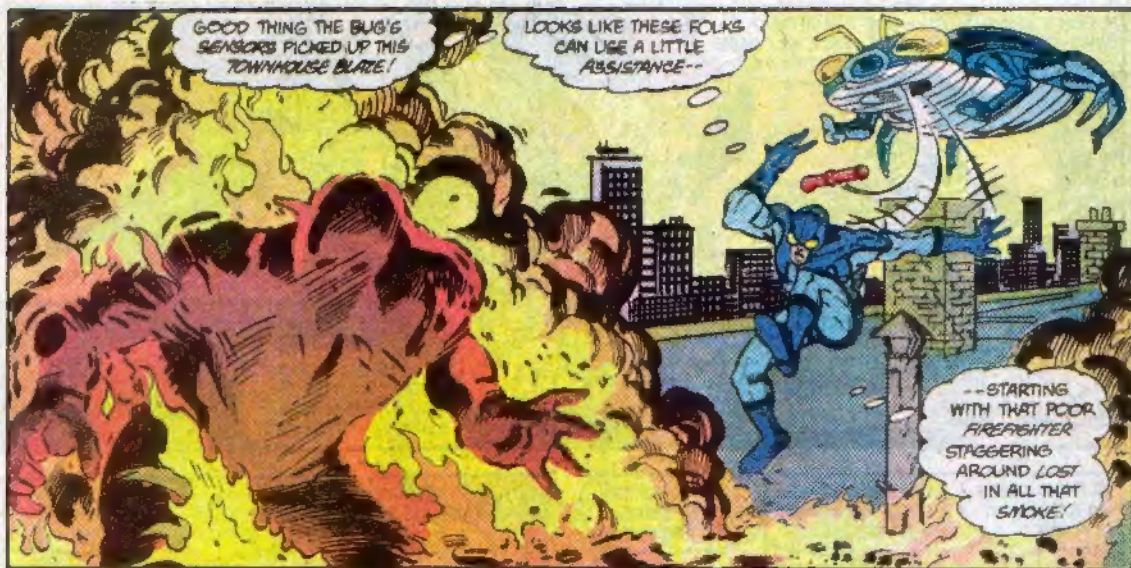
THE PEOPLE OF A
SIMPLER TIME AND
PLACE KNEW HIM
ONLY AS...

BLUE BEETLE

REMEMBER THE NAME! AFTER
TODAY, YOU'LL NEVER FORGET IT!

OUT FROM THE ASHES!

RETURN TO A SPECIAL KIND OF GREATNESS, WITH...
LEN WEIN: WRITER / PARIS CULLINS: REVIEWSER / BRUCE D. PATTERSON: INKER/
JOHN COSTANZA: LETTERER / ANTHONY TOLLIN: COLORIST / JULIUS SCHWARTZ: EDITOR



GOOD THING THE BUG'S SENSORS PICKED UP THIS TOWNHOUSE BLAZE!

LOOKS LIKE THESE FOLKS CAN USE A LITTLE ASSISTANCE--

--STARTING WITH THAT POOR FIREFIGHTER STAGGERING AROUND LOST IN ALL THAT SMOKE!



DON'T PANIC, PAL! JUST GIVE ME YOUR HAND--

--AND I'LL LEAD YOU TO SAFETY!!



CLIMBING!!

BROKE

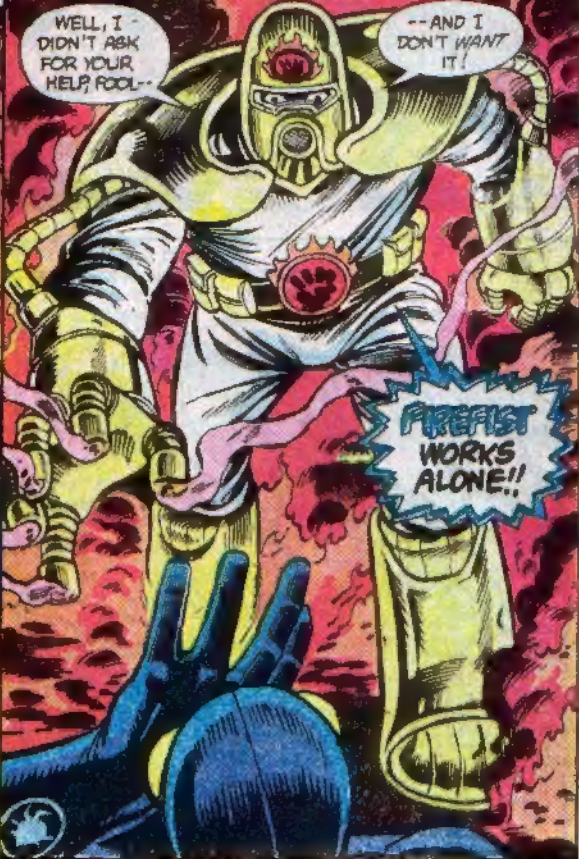
IDIOT! KEEP AWAY FROM ME!!



SEEMS MY LITTLE COMEBACK--JOW--IS NOT EXACTLY GETTING OFF TO A GLORIOUS START!

JUST WHAT THE HECK IS WARMS WITH YOU, MISTER?

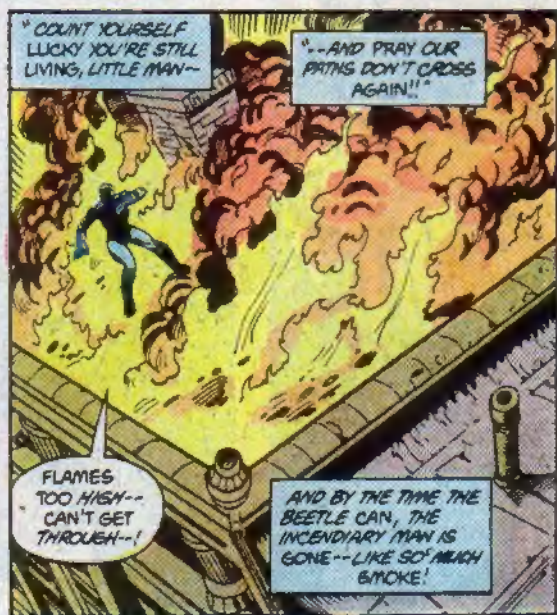
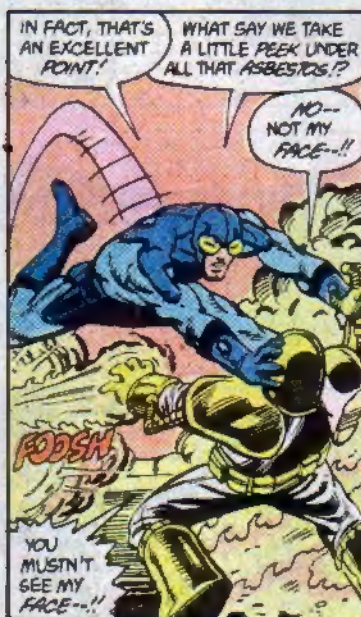
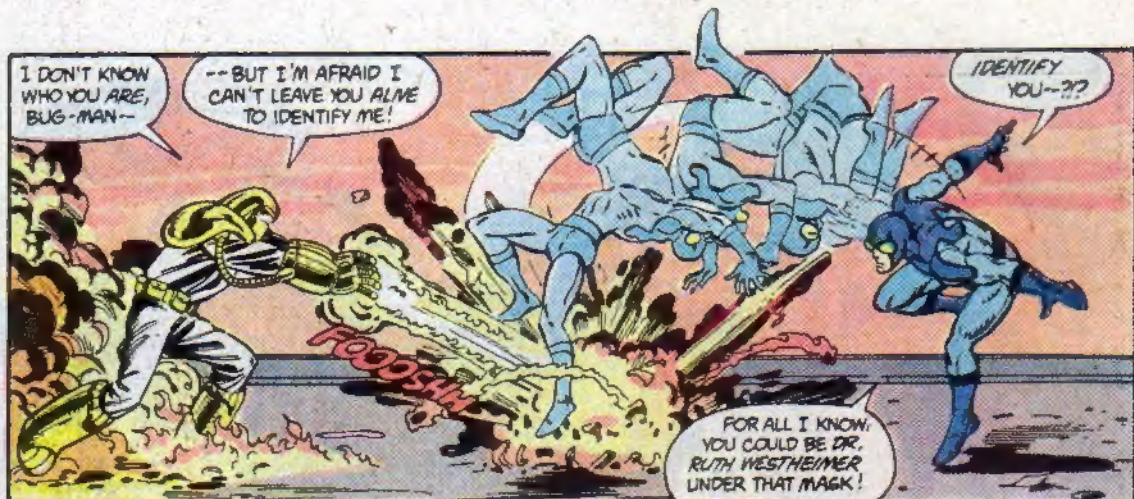
I ONLY WANTED TO HELP!

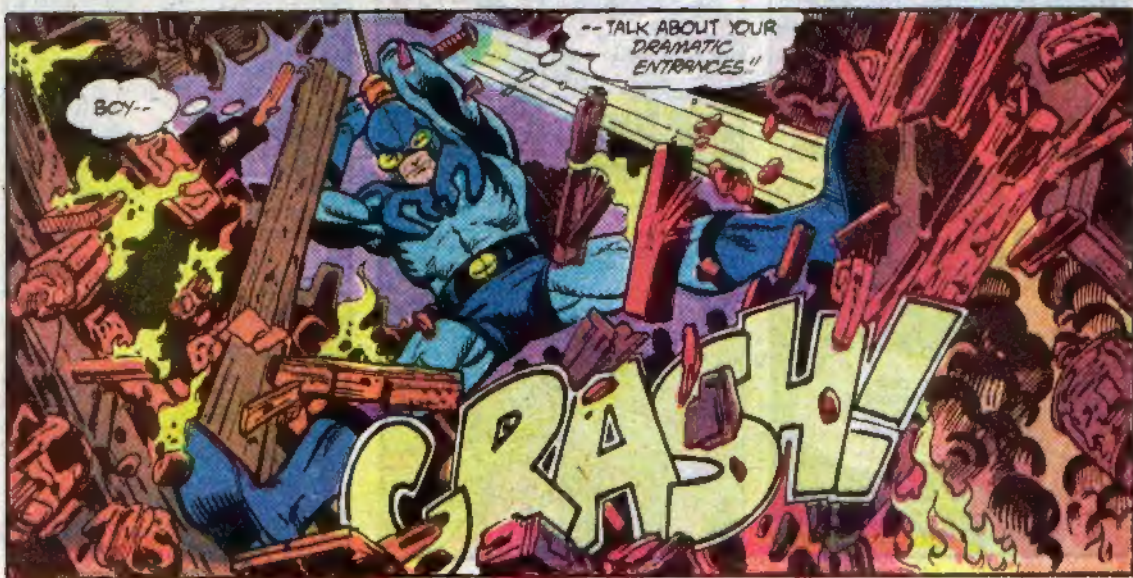
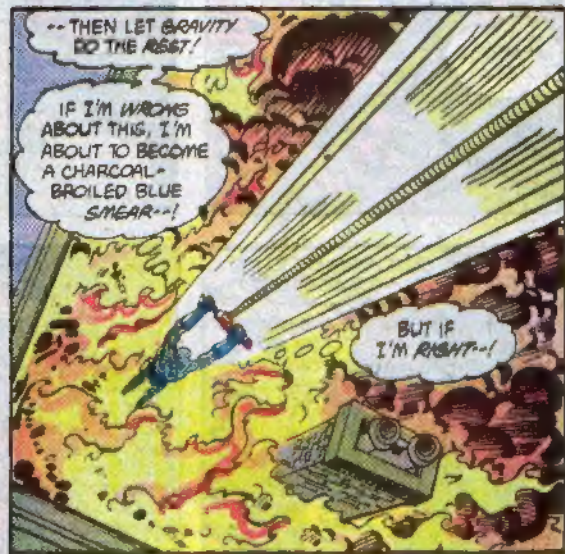


WELL, I DIDN'T ASK FOR YOUR HELP, FOOL--

--AND I DON'T WANT IT!

FIREFIST WORKS ALONE!!







FIRE WEAKENED THE ROOF JUST ENOUGH FOR ME TO BREAK THROUGH IT--

EASY, PAL-- I'VE GOT YOU!

--WITHOUT IT BREAKING ME!

H-HELP... ME...



YOU'RE GONNA BE OKAY!



JUST LET ME GRAB MY SKY-WIRE--

--AND I'LL GET US BOTH OUT OF HERE BEFORE IT'S--



--TOO LATE!!

BUILDING IS STARTING TO SHAKE ITSELF TO PIECES AROUND US--!

NO TIME TO TRIGGER THE SKY-WIRE NOW--!



JUST HANG ON TO ME, PAL--FOR DEAR LIFE!

AND WHATEVER ELSE YOU DO-- DON'T MOVE!

OUR FATHER WHO ART IN HEAVEN...



WITH A SHUDDER LIKE THE SHRUS OF A RED-BRICK GIANT, THE DEVASTATED TOWN-HOUSE GROANS IN HIDEOUS PROTEST--

THERE SHE GOES--!

DAMMIT!

--THEN SURRENDERS TO ITS PAIN!



AND WHEN THE SMOKE AND DUST FINALLY CLEAR...

IT WORKED! THE BUILDING FELL AWAY ALL AROUND US--

--BUT BECAUSE OF THE LARGE HOLE DIRECTLY OVERHEAD, WE WERE UNTOUCHED--!

AND THEY SAY THE SUPER-HERO BIZ IS EASY!!



AND, MINUTE'S LATER...

YOU'LL BE ALL RIGHT NOW, FELLA!

YEAH... THANKS TO YOU!

HEY, IT'S WE WHO OUGHTA THANK YOU-- FOR THE INCREDIBLE JOBS YOU GUYS DO EVERY DAY!

SEE YOU AROUND... FRIEND



HEY, YOU IN THE BUG SUIT--

I WANNA TALK TO YOU, MISTER!

SO WHAT ELSE IS NEW?



DON'T GET CUTE WITH ME!

WE'VE JUST BEEN THROUGH HELL HERE-- AND, BY GOD, I WANT SOME ANSWERS!

I DON'T EVEN KNOW THE QUESTIONS, CHIEF!



ALL I CAN TELL YOU IS THAT THE LUNATIC WHO APPARENTLY STARTED THE BLAZE CALLED HIMSELF FIREFIST, THE INCENDIARY MAN!

BUT THEN, I CALL MYSELF THE BLUE BEETLE-- SO WHO AM I TO THROW STONES?

WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM?



LOST HIM IN THE FLAMES, I'M AFRAID! BY NOW, HE'S LONG GONE!

BLAST IT-- THIS WAS THE FIRE COMM-SIGNER'S HOME!

HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO EXPLAIN THIS TO HIM?



LISTEN, I'D REALLY LOVE TO STAY AND CHAT--

--BUT I'VE GOT PROMISES TO KEEP--

MUM--??



--AND MILES TO GO BEFORE I SLEEP!

HEY-- WAIT! I--

AH-- NUTS!



Y'KNOW-- I'D ALMOST FORGOTTEN HOW MUCH I MISSED ALL THIS!

GOD, IT'S GOOD TO BE BACK!



GEE-- THE BLUE BEETLE!

AND I STOOD RIGHT NEXT TO HIM!

KEEP IT UP, DOMBROWSKI--

--AND YOU'RE GONNA BE STANDING ON THE UNEMPLOYMENT LINE!

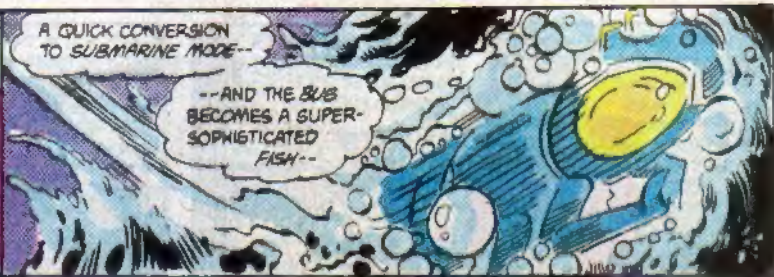
AND, AS THE LENGTHENING SHADOWS OF LATE AFTERNOON STRETCH ACROSS THE SPRAWLING EXPANSE OF LAKE MICHIGAN...

WELL, THAT WASN'T EXACTLY EVERYTHING I'D HOPED MY FIRST DAY OUT OF RETIREMENT WOULD BE--



-- BUT IF I PREVENTED FIREFIST FROM DOING EVEN MORE DAMAGE, THAT'S AT LEAST SOMETHING!

A QUICK CONVERSION TO SUBMARINE MODE--



--AND THE SUB BECOMES A SUPER-SOPHISTICATED FISH--

--CARRYING ME EFFORTLESSLY TO THE SECRET HATCH-LOCK I'VE BUILT INTO THE SIDE OF THE LAKEBED--

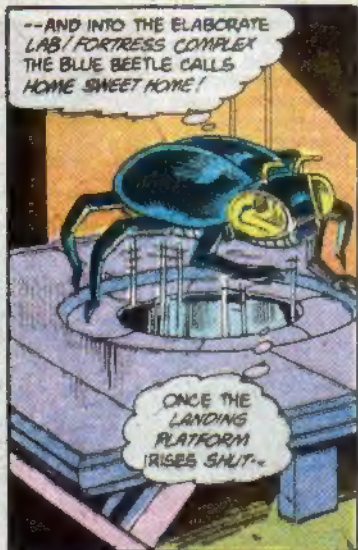


-- AND THEN, ONCE ITS ELECTRONICALLY-OPERATED DOORS ARE SEALED BEHIND ME--



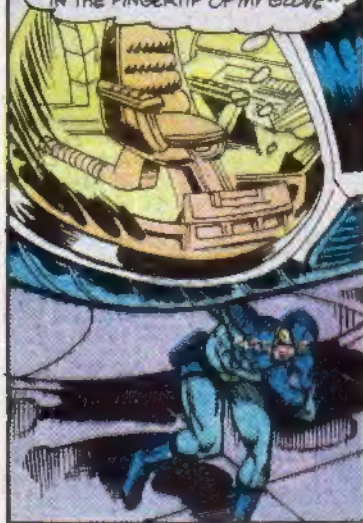
--UP THROUGH THE REINFORCED TUNNEL--

--AND INTO THE ELABORATE LAB/FORTRESS COMPLEX THE BLUE BEETLE CALLS HOME SWEET HOME!



ONCE THE LANDING PLATFORM RISES SHUT--

-- I CAN UNLOCK THE CHINSTRAP OF MY METALLIC-MESH MASK WITH THE ELECTRONIC CONTROL IN THE FINGERTIP OF MY GLOVE--



--AND SAY BYE-BYE, BLUE BEETLE, FREE-SWINGING SUPER-HERO--

-- AND HELLO TED KORD, SCIENTIST, ENTREPRENEUR, AND CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF KORD, INC!





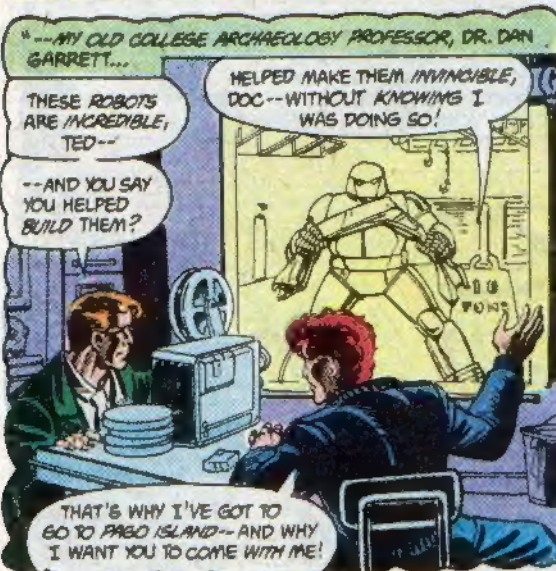
WE'VE BEEN THROUGH A LOT TOGETHER THROUGH THE YEARS... HAVEN'T WE, BUG-OL' BUDDY?

WHO'D EVER HAVE THOUGHT WHEN MY UNCLE JARVIS APPARENTLY DIED IN THAT LAB EXPLOSION THAT IT WOULD ONE DAY LEAD TO THIS?!



"IT WAS THAT BOX I FOUND UNDAUNAGED IN THE RUINS -- FILLED WITH NOTES, MAPS, AND THAT AWFUL REEL OF FILM -- THAT STARTED IT ALL...

"ONCE I'D WATCHED THE FILM, MY HORROR GROWING GREATER WITH EVERY MOMENT, I TURNED FOR HELP TO THE ONE MAN I COULD TRUST--



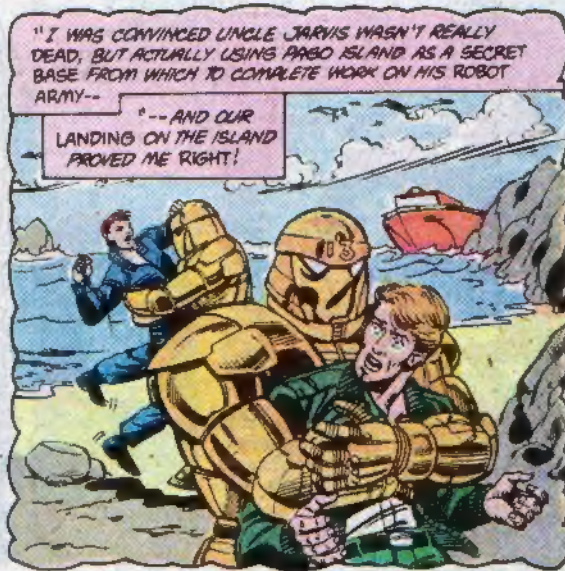
"--MY OLD COLLEGE ARCHAEOLOGY PROFESSOR, DR. DAN GARRETT...

THESE ROBOTS ARE INCREDIBLE, TED--

--AND YOU SAY YOU HELPED BUILD THEM?

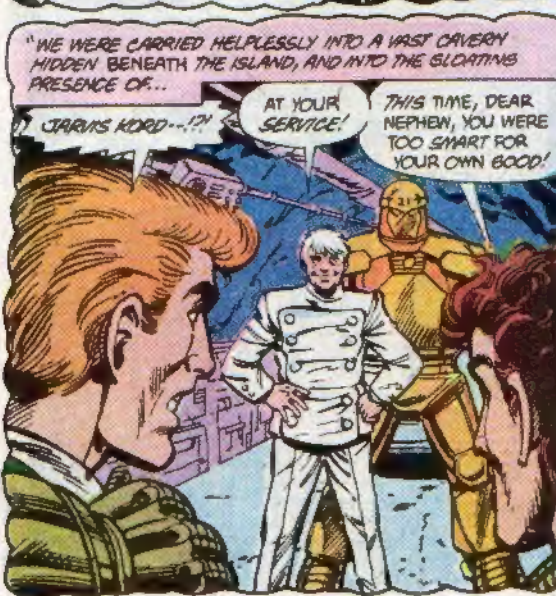
HELPED MAKE THEM INVINCIBLE, DOC-- WITHOUT KNOWING I WAS DOING SO!

THAT'S WHY I'VE GOT TO GO TO PAGO ISLAND-- AND WHY I WANT YOU TO COME WITH ME!



"I WAS CONVINCED UNCLE JARVIS WASN'T REALLY DEAD, BUT ACTUALLY USING PAGO ISLAND AS A SECRET BASE FROM WHICH TO COMPLETE WORK ON HIS ROBOT ARMY--

"--AND OUR LANDING ON THE ISLAND PROVED ME RIGHT!

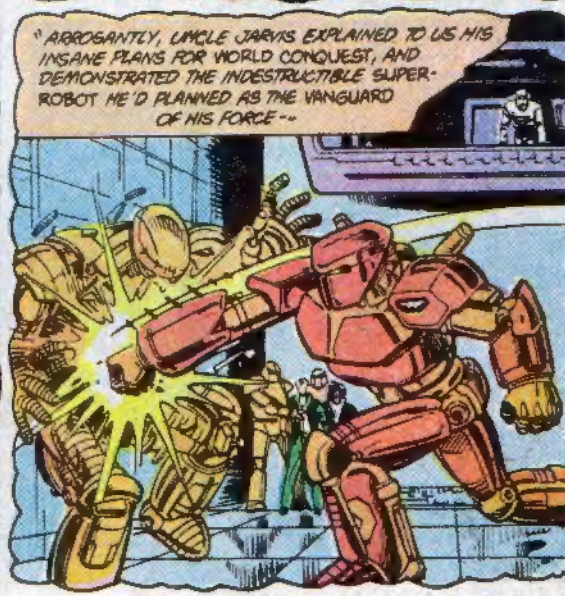


"WE WERE CARRIED HELPLESSLY INTO A VAST CAVERN HIDDEN BENEATH THE ISLAND, AND INTO THE GLOATING PRESENCE OF...

JARVIS KORD--?!"

AT YOUR SERVICE!

THIS TIME, DEAR NEPHEW, YOU WERE TOO SMART FOR YOUR OWN GOOD!



"ARROGANTLY, UNCLE JARVIS EXPLAINED TO US HIS INSANE PLANS FOR WORLD CONQUEST, AND DEMONSTRATED THE INDESTRUCTIBLE SUPER-ROBOT HE'D PLANNED AS THE VANGUARD OF HIS FORCE--



-- THEN, HAVING COMPLETED THE GRAND TOUR, HE ORDERED HIS ROBOTS TO CRUSH US.

FORGIVE ME FOR BETTING YOU INTO THIS, DOC--!

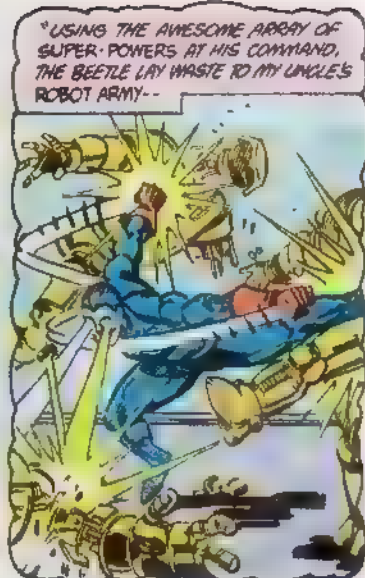
WE'RE NOT FINISHED YET, TED--

KARTI DHA!!



* TWO SIMPLE MAGIC WORDS-- AND BY THE POWER OF HIS MYSTIC SCARAB, DR DAN GARRETT WAS INSTANTLY TRANSFORMED--

-- INTO THE LEGENDARY HERO CALLED-- **THE BLUE BEETLE!**



* USING THE AWESOME ARRAY OF SUPER-POWERS AT HIS COMMAND, THE BEETLE LAY WASTE TO MY UNCLE'S ROBOT ARMY--



-- UNTIL JARVIS KORD DESTROYED HIS ROBOTS AND HIMSELF IN A SUICIDAL EFFORT TO SLAY THE RAMBAGING BEETLE--

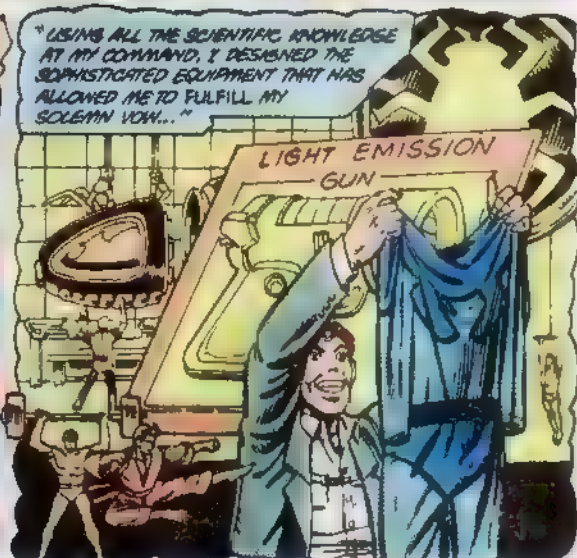


-- AN EFFORT WHICH, IMPOSSIBLY, SUCCEEDED!

I'M... FINISHED, TED...

PROMISE YOU'LL CARRY ON FOR ME...

I WILL, DOC-- I SWEAR IT!!



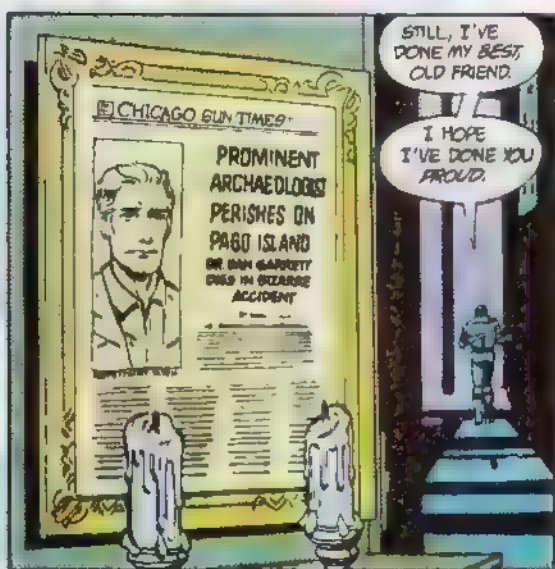
* USING ALL THE SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE AT MY COMMAND, I DESIGNED THE SOPHISTICATED EQUIPMENT THAT HAS ALLOWED ME TO FULFILL MY SOLEMN VOW--

LIGHT EMISSION GUN



. BUT IT HASN'T BEEN EASY TRYING TO LIVE UP TO THE LEGEND OF THE BLUE BEETLE--

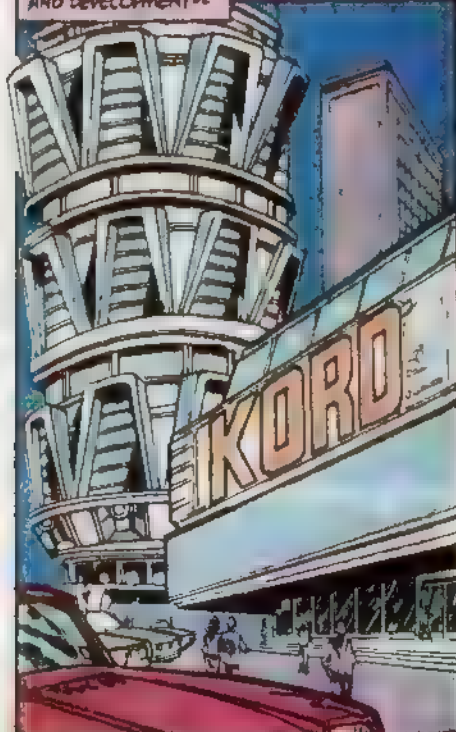
-- WITHOUT DAN'S SACRED SCARAB AND THE SUPER-POWERS IT BESTOWED!



STILL, I'VE DONE MY BEST, OLD FRIEND.

I HOPE I'VE DONE YOU PROUD.

A SHUTTLE ELEVATOR RIDE CARRIES TED KORD UP FROM THE SUBTERRANEAN SANCTUARY OF THE BLUE BEETLE TO THE KOWBOYS LAKESHORE EDIFICE THAT IS KORD OMNIVERBAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT--



-- AND THENCE INTO THE WELL-APPOINTED RECEPTION AREA ADMINISTERED BY THE OMNIPRESENT ANGELA REVERE...

EVENING, ANGIE STILL HOLDING DOWN THE PORT 'T SEE.

HOW'S YOUR SICK UNCLE?

STILL BEDRIPPEN, BOSS--



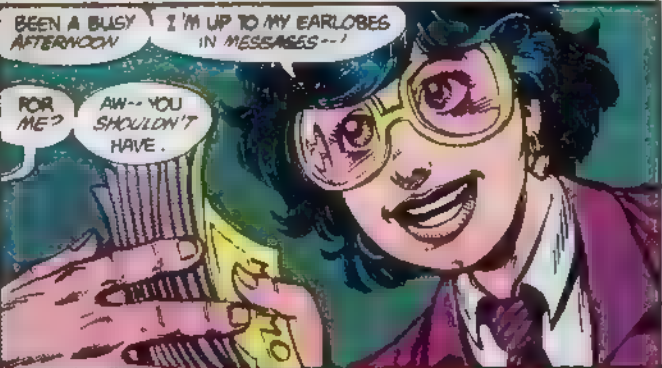
-- BUT THANKS FOR ASKING.

BEEN A BUSY AFTERNOON

I'M UP TO MY EARLOBES IN MESSAGES--

FOR ME?

AH-- YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE.



LET'S SEE NOW.

TELL THIS ONE YES..

TELL THIS ONE NO...

..UH-HUH

.. MAYBE..

.. NOT ENOUGH MONEY..

NOT EVEN IN AN EMERGENCY

YES, BUT NOT TILL NEXT MONTH

...TELL HER I'M BUSY...



.. AND THE REST CAN WAIT!

GOTCHA, BOSS

OH-- AND MURRAY OVER AT S.T.A.R. CALLED. SAYS THEY REALLY NEED YOUR HELP AGAIN.

;SIGH: NO REST FOR THE WEARY.

ANYTHING ELSE FOR ME TO WORRY ABOUT--OR CAN I GO JOIN THE REST OF MY ZOO CREW OVER IN THE LAB?

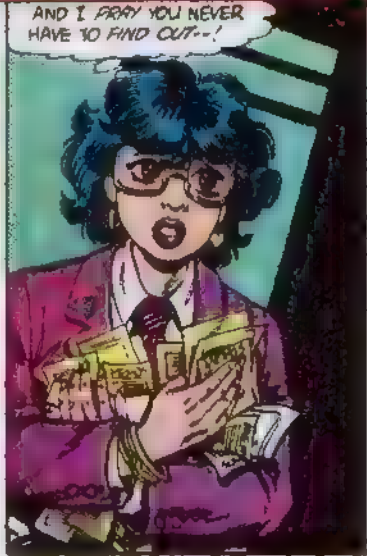
THINK THAT'S EVERYTHING, BOSS.

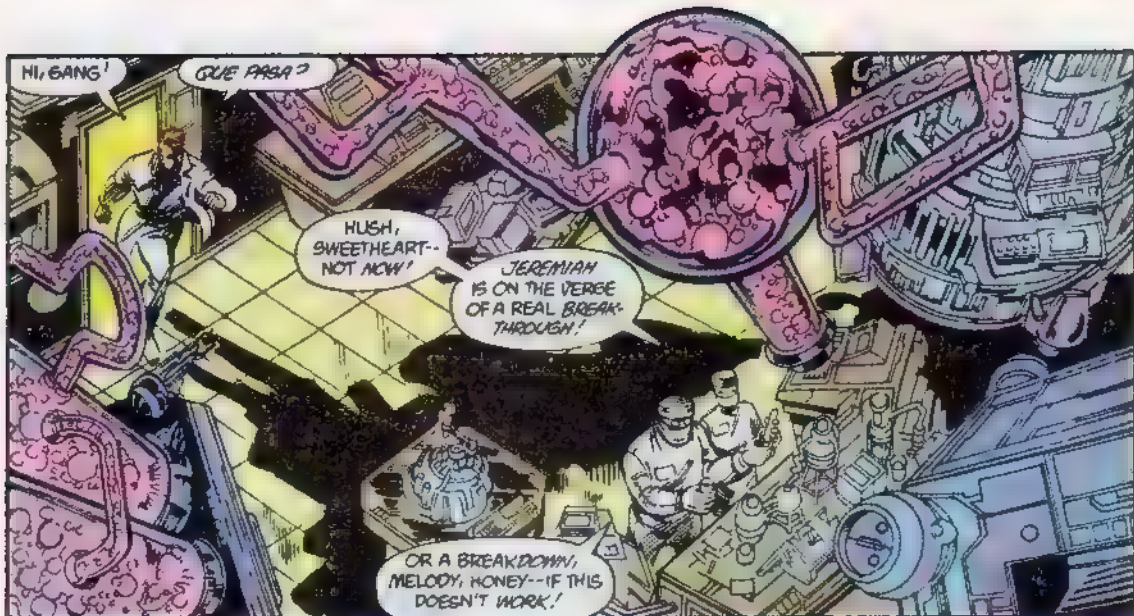
DON'T KNOW WHAT I'D DO WITHOUT YOU, KID.

AND I PRAY YOU NEVER HAVE TO FIND OUT--!



TELL HIM I'LL STOP BY LATER OKAY?





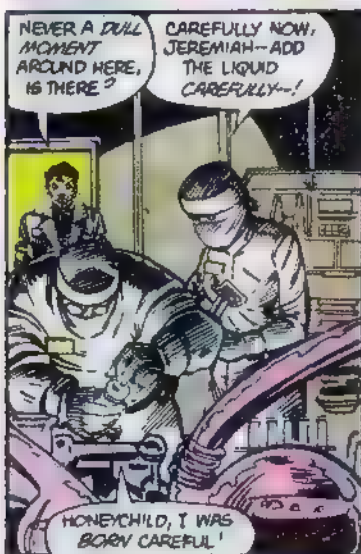
HI, GANG!

QUE PASA?

HUSH,
SWEETHEART--
NOT NOW!

JEREMIAH
IS ON THE VERGE
OF A REAL BREAK-
THROUGH!

OR A BREAKDOWN,
MELODY, HONEY--IF THIS
DOESN'T WORK!



NEVER A DULL
MOMENT
AROUND HERE,
IS THERE?

CAREFULLY NOW,
JEREMIAH--ADD
THE LIQUID
CAREFULLY--!

HONEYCHILD, I WAS
BORN CAREFUL!



MAMA DUNCAN
DIDN'T RAISE NO
STUPID CHILDREN--
'CEPT FOR MY
BROTHER
ALBERT!

ONE DROP OF
THIS REAGENT
AND THE
FORMULA
SHOULD GO--



BOOOOOM!

MELODY?
JEREMIAH?!!?

MY GOD,
ARE YOU TWO
ALL RIGHT?



YEAH,
WE'RE
JUST
FINE,
TED--

--BUT SO MUCH FOR THE
CONCEPT OF INSTANT
FILET MIGNON!

INSTANT
FILET...?



HEY, LOOK, YOU
GUYS-- I'VE GOT
A GREAT IDEA
FOR A LITTLE
CHANGE OF FACE.

REALLY?

LIKE
WHAT?



HOW ABOUT
WORKING ON ONE
OF THE PROJECTS
I HIRED YOU
FOR?!!?

OH...

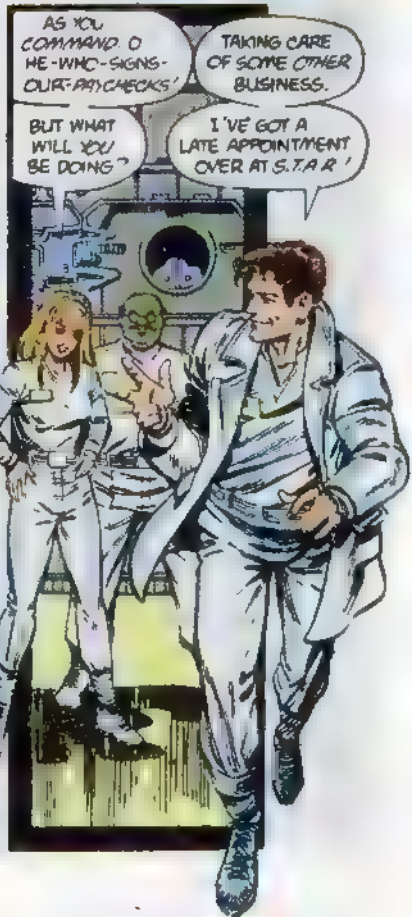
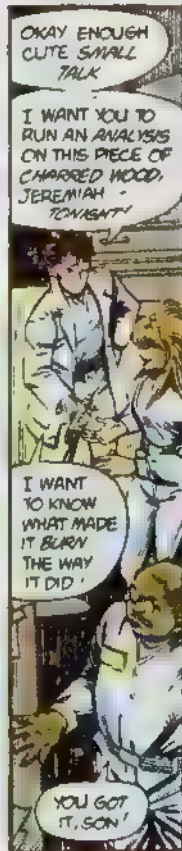
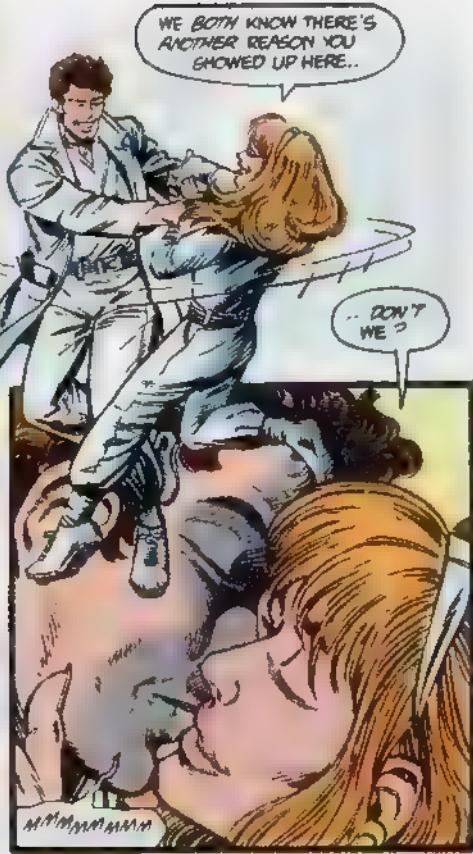
...THAT.



SHEESH--
EVERYBODY'S
A CRITIC
THESE DAYS!

JUST REMEMBER
THEY ALSO LAUGHED
AT THE GUY WHO
CREATED NUTTY
PUTTY!

YEAH-- BUT
IN THAT CASE
THEY WERE
RIGHT!



PAGO ISLAND: HERE, ON THIS ISOLATED SPIT OF SAND IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ATLANTIC OCEAN, LITTLE GROWS AND NOTHING LIVES--

--SAVE FOR THE WHISPERED TALES AND MUTTERED LEGENDS OF THOSE WHO HAVE HORRIBLY DIED HERE--

--AND THE SOLITARY FIGURE WHO HAS COME HERE TONIGHT TO MAKE THIS ROCK HIS HOME--

THE SECRET IS HERE...

...IT HAS TO BE!

THERE IS SOMETHING ON THIS CURSED ISLAND THAT WAS WORTH DAN GARRETT'S LIFE--

--AND I INTEND TO STAY HERE UNTIL I FIND IT!

WHERE GARRETT FAILED, I SHALL SUCCEED--

--AND THE WHOLE WORLD WILL FINALLY HONOR CONRAD CARAPAX!

WHILE, IN A RUINED CAVERN FAR BENEATH CONRAD CARAPAX'S FEET, THE UNPARALLELED SECRET OF PAGO ISLAND STANDS SILENT AND IMMOBILE--

--FOR NOW!

THE CHICAGO BRANCH OF SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCED RESEARCH IS JUST LIKE ALL THE OTHERS SCATTERED ACROSS THE COUNTRY--



-- A TALL SLEEK IMPRESSIVE MONUMENT--

--STAFFED BY PEOPLE JUST THE SLIGHTEST BIT BIZARRE...

PUFF PUFF
PUFF PUFF
PUFF

LET ME
KNOW WHEN YOU
REACH ESCAPE
VELOCITY, MURRAY.

I'LL TRY TO
GET OUT OF
YOUR WAY!

MUR--? WELL--
IT'S ABOUT
TIME YOU GOT
HERE KORD!

HEY, YOU
DON'T
EXACTLY
PAY ME BY
THE HOUR,
TAKAMOTO!

WELL, IT'S NOT 'CAUSE I
HAVEN'T TRIED TO, ROOMIE--

AND TOO SUCCESSFUL--LET'S
NOT FORGET THAT PART!

AND DON'T
TRY TO PUN
ON MY
SYMPATHIES
EITHER

--BUT YOU'RE JUST
TOO DARN STUBBORN!

WE
HAVEN'T BEEN
ROOMMATES
SINCE
COLLEGE!

SO WHAT'S
THE PROBLEM
THIS TIME?

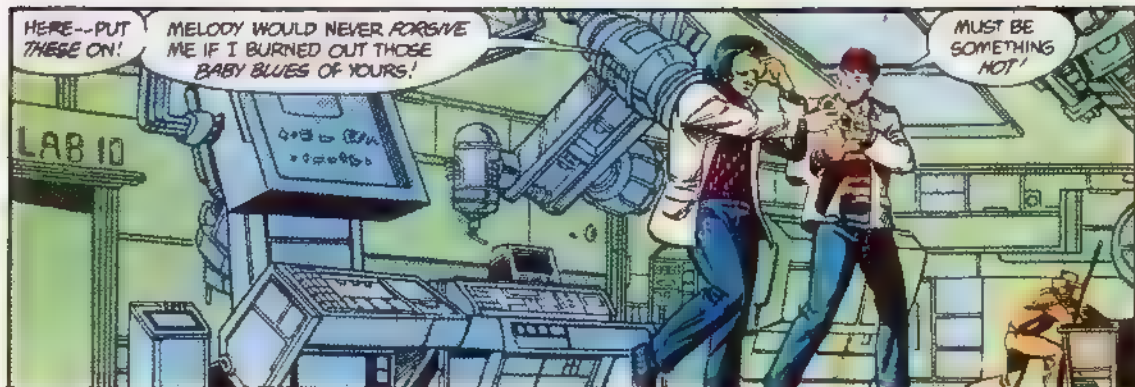
C'MON, KORD--
GIMME A BREAK!

I SWALLOW A LOT OF
PRIDE EVERY TIME
I CALL YOU--

--BUT THIS TIME,
I HAD NO CHOICE!

C'MON DOWN TO THE MAX REGULAR
SCI-LAB WITH ME--AND TAKE
A LOOK!

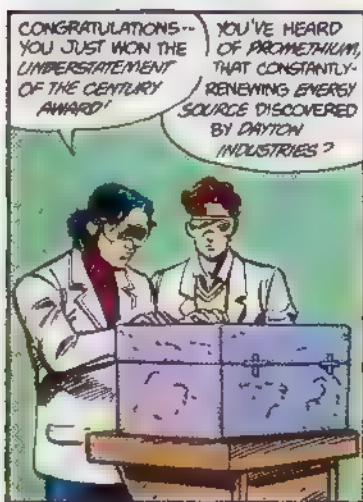
BUT I
PROMISE YOU--
WHAT I HAVE
TO SHOW YOU
ISN'T VERY
PRETTY!



HERE--PUT THESE ON!

MELODY WOULD NEVER FORGIVE ME IF I BURNED OUT THOSE BABY BLUES OF YOURS!

MUST BE SOMETHING NOT!



CONGRATULATIONS-- YOU JUST WON THE UNDERSTATEMENT OF THE CENTURY AWARD!

YOU'VE HEARD OF PROMETHIUM, THAT CONSTANTLY-RENEWING ENERGY SOURCE DISCOVERED BY DAYTON INDUSTRIES?



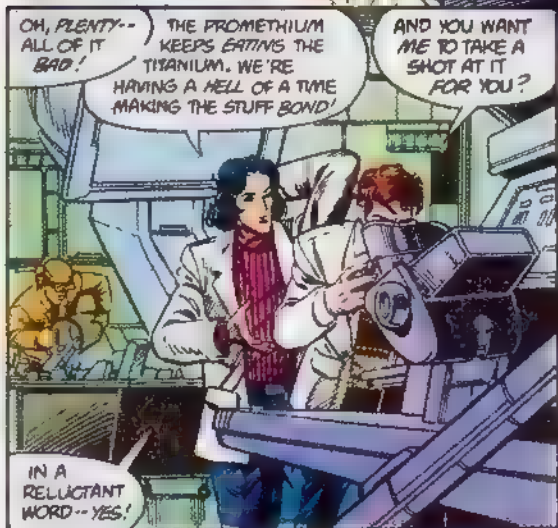
WELL, WE JUST HAPPEN TO HAVE A FAIR-SIZED CHUNK OF IT RIGHT HERE!

SO I'D SEE, IF I COULD SEE!



WE'VE BEEN TRYING TO ALLOY THE PROMETHIUM WITH A TITANIUM-VANADIUM BLEND TO CREATE A NEW KIND OF ARMOR-PLATING--!

AND I TAKE IT YOU'RE NOT HAVING MUCH LUCK--?

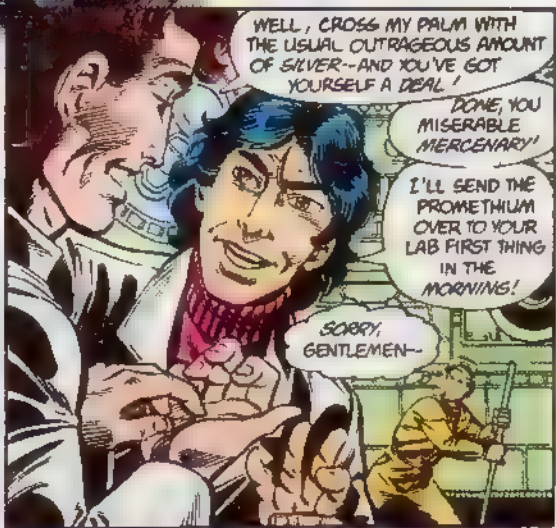


OH, PLENTY-- ALL OF IT BAD!

THE PROMETHIUM KEEPS EATING THE TITANIUM. WE'RE HAVING A HELL OF A TIME MAKING THE STUFF BOND!

AND YOU WANT ME TO TAKE A SHOT AT IT FOR YOU?

IN A RELUCTANT WORD--YES!



WELL, CROSS MY PALM WITH THE USUAL OUTRAGEOUS AMOUNT OF SILVER--AND YOU'VE GOT YOURSELF A DEAL!

DONE, YOU MISERABLE MERCENARY!

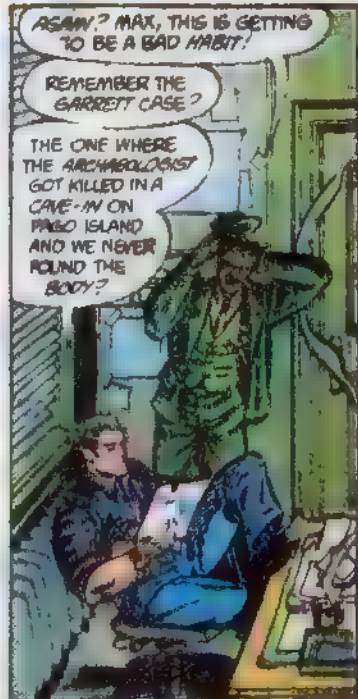
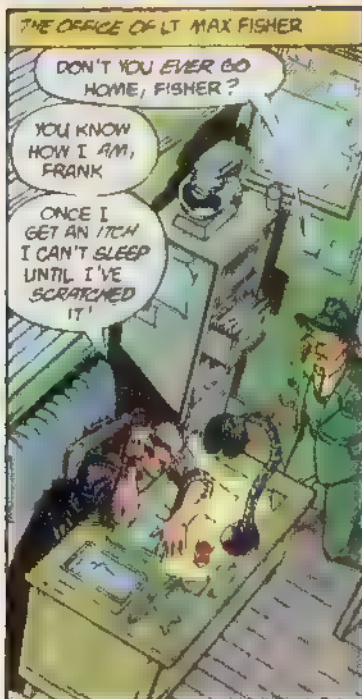
I'LL SEND THE PROMETHIUM OVER TO YOUR LAB FIRST THING IN THE MORNINGS!

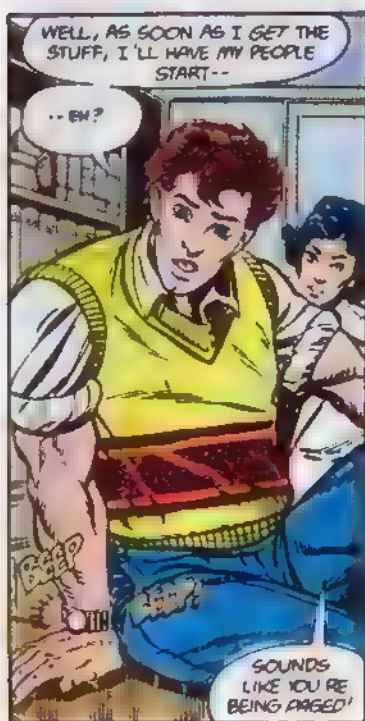
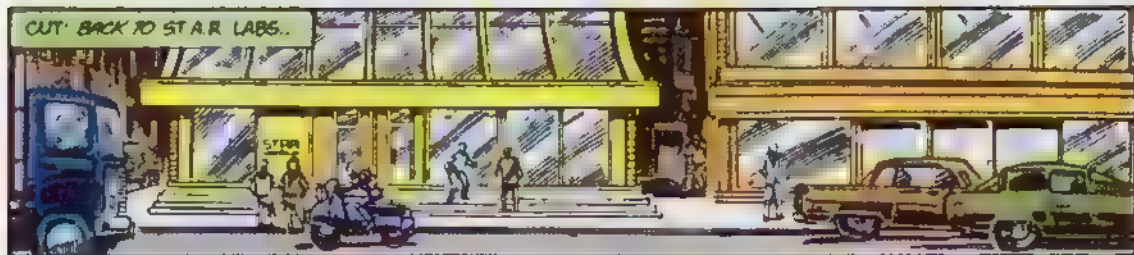
SORRY, GENTLEMEN--

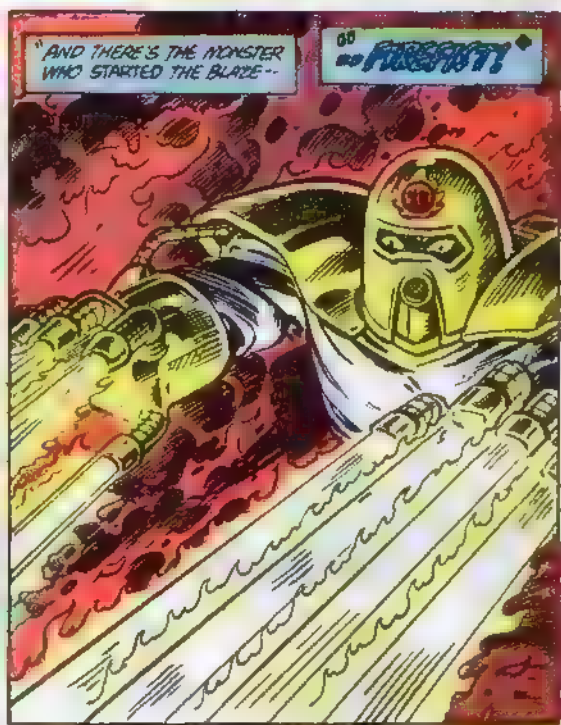
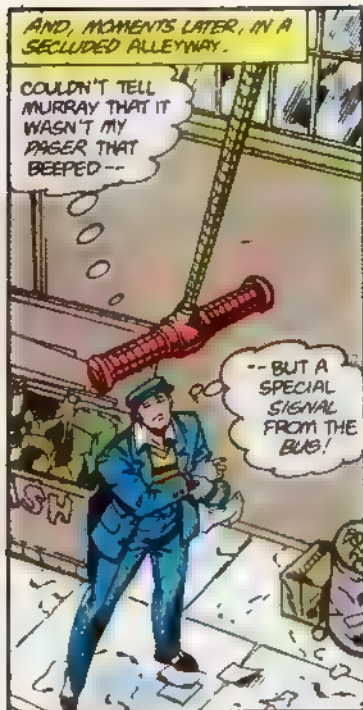


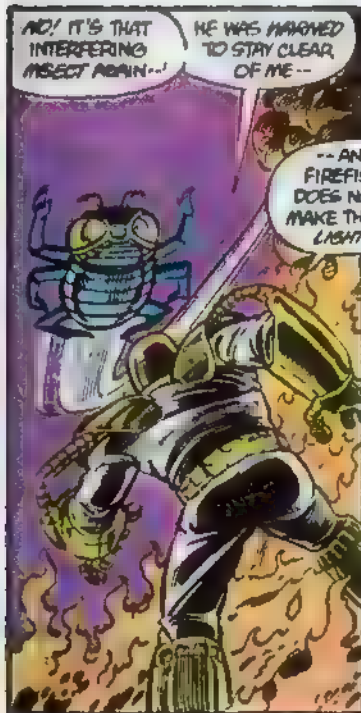
--BUT I DON'T THINK I CAN ALLOW THAT!

I'M AFRAID IT WOULD SPARK ALL MY CAREFULLY-LAID PLANS!





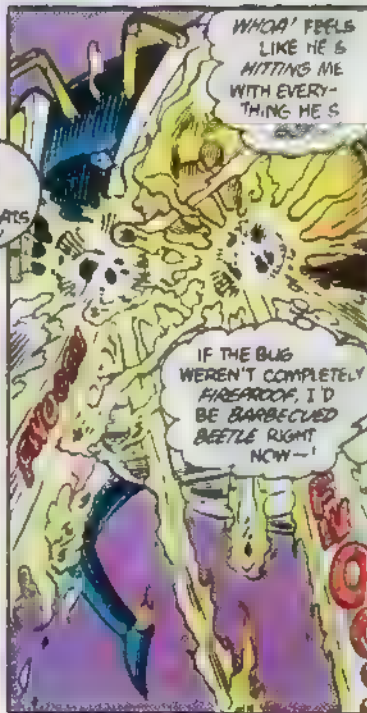




NO! IT'S THAT INTERFERING INSECT AGAIN--!

HE WAS WARNED TO STAY CLEAR OF ME--

--AND FIREFIST DOES NOT MAKE THREATS LIGHTLY!



WHOA! FEELS LIKE HE'S HITTING ME WITH EVERYTHING HE'S

IF THE BUG WEREN'T COMPLETELY FIREPROOF, I'D BE BARBECUED BEETLE RIGHT NOW--!

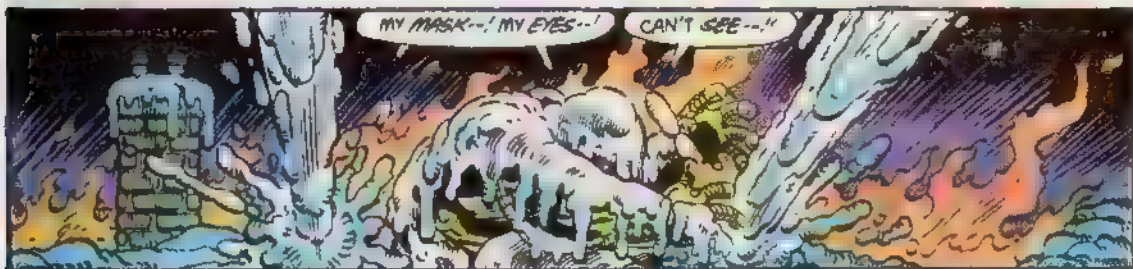
CRASH!



BUT THIS TIME, I'M NOT ENTIRELY UNPREPARED MYSELF--!

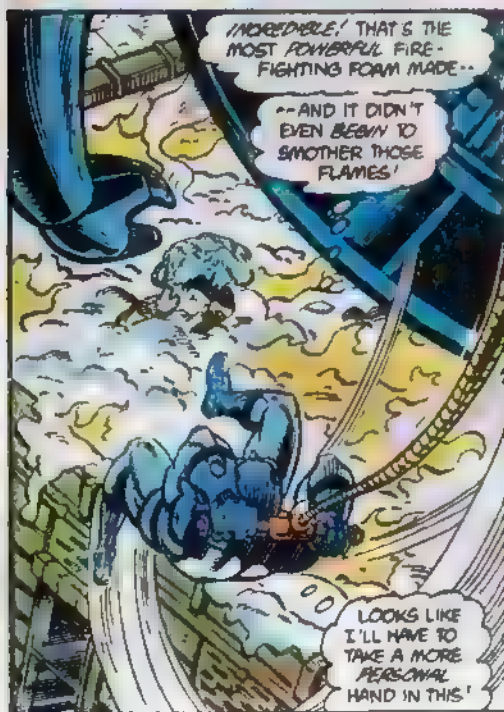
EAT EXTINGUISHER-FOAM, MOTHHEAD!!

FLOOSH!!



MY MASK--! MY EYES--!

CAN'T SEE--!!



INCREDIBLE! THAT'S THE MOST POWERFUL FIRE-FIGHTING FOAM MADE--

--AND IT DIDN'T EVEN BEGIN TO SMOTHER THOSE FLAMES!

LOOKS LIKE I'LL HAVE TO TAKE A MORE PERSONAL HAND IN THIS!



OR FOOT, AS THE CASE MAY BE!

SORRY, FIREFIST--BUT THE COOKOUT'S OVER!!

BROK!

IT APPEARS WE'VE RUN OUT OF MARSH-MALLOWES!

RUNNNN!!

AND BESIDES--
I HAPPEN TO BE
A CLOSE PERSONAL
FRIEND OF SMOKEY
THE BEAR!

OUCH! ALMOST
BUSTED MY
KNUCKLES
ON THAT ARMOR
OF HIS--!

WHY, INSECT--?

WHY MUST YOU
CONTINUE TO
OPPOSE ME?

HEY, I KNOW IT'S
A DIRTY JOB,
FLAMEBRAIN--

--BUT SOMEBODY
HAS TO DO IT!

BESIDES, A FELLA ONCE SAID THAT
ALL THAT'S NECESSARY FOR THE
TRIUMPH OF EVIL IS THAT MEN OF
GOOD WILL DO NOTHING--

--SO I INTEND TO
DO SOMETHING,
BRIGHT-EYES--

--EVEN IF
IT KILLS ME!

POOSH

THRAH

WHOOOON

CALL IT A PERSONALITY
QUIRK, FIREFIST--

--BUT I LIKE
TO SLEEP
SOUNDLY
AT NIGHT!

YOU'LL
SLEEP FOREVER
WHEN I'M DONE
WITH YOU,
FOOL--!

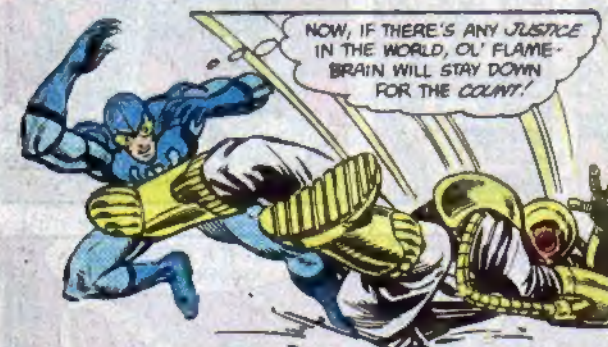
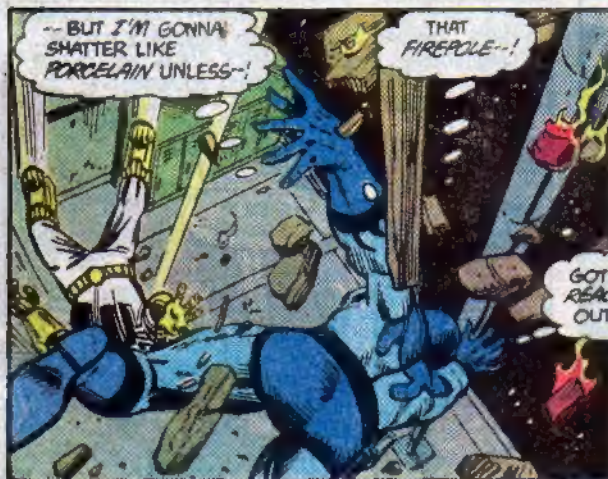
WHAT ARE
YOU--?!

NO! NOT THE
ROOF--!!

KWA-
WHOOH

MADMAN
BLEW THE
SHINGLES
RIGHT OUT
FROM UNDER
US--!

HIS ARMOR
SHOULD PROTECT
HIM FROM
THE FALL--





BLUE BEETLE

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Julius Schwartz, Editor
Tom Condon, Managing Editor
Pat Bastienne, Editorial Coordinator
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Paul Levitz, Executive Vice President
Joe Orlando, Vice Pres.-Creative Director
Ed Shukin, Vice Pres.-Circulation
Bruce Bristow, Marketing Director
Patrick Caidon, Controller

WAITING FOR A TEXT

I was sitting in my office at DC Comics the other day minding everybody's business when Julie Schwartz walked in. "Whatta ya want, Schwartz?" I asked in my typical polite tone. "MISTER Schwartz to you, Rozakis," he responded. "Whatta ya want, Mister Schwartz?" I asked again, not wishing to get into our usual debate about where and when he calls me "Rozakis" and I call him "Schwartz." (Just for the record, he usually calls me "Mr. Rozakis" when he wants me to insert the new year's worth of pages in his desk calendar or some bolt has fallen out of his chair and he's afraid the thing will collapse if I don't put it back in right away. Otherwise, I am usually greeted in his office with "Whatta you want, Rozakis?")

Anyway, the reason for Julie's visit was to ask me to do the text page for BLUE BEETLE, a task I figured I would be getting anyway, since I (with some able assistance from my wife Laurie) have written virtually every text page for every magazine Julie's edited for the past ten years. "What do you want me to write about?" I asked. "There aren't any letters."

"Letters," he snorted. "There isn't even any finished art yet!"

I have to admit I wasn't surprised. With the exception of Julie, who boasts he is hardly ever late for anything in his life, the creative team on BLUE BEETLE is not exactly considered the top of the list when it comes to on-time delivery. But we'll get to that.

After tossing some ideas back and forth, Julie suggested that I do an interview of Paris Cullins, the erstwhile artist on BLUE BEETLE. "He's coming in this afternoon," said Julie. "Sit him down for half an hour and get what you need."

Well, that was Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday all came and went and it is now Sunday afternoon and there has still been no sign of Paris. (Though he might have gone to the office today. I'm not there, so I can't say for sure.) There is, therefore, little I can tell you about Paris, other than the fact that he has the biggest collection of rulers ever borrowed from my Production Department.

I was talking to Laurie last night about the fact that I have to do a text

page with no information and described it as "Waiting for Paris." This prompted us into a discussion that evolved into what follows ... with apologies to Samuel Beckett, author of "Waiting for Godot."

WAITING FOR PARIS

a tragicomedy in one act

(Julie Schwartz and Bob Rozakis sit in Julie's office. Julie is looking at his schedule book, shaking his head.)

BOB: Nothing to be done.

JULIE: I'm beginning to come round to that opinion. All my life I've tried to be on time, saying, Julie, be reasonable, you haven't tried everything. And I resumed the struggle. (He broods.) So there you are again.

BOB: Am I? I must be. This is another book you're editing and it needs a text so here I am.

JULIE: And here you are. But what shall we do?

BOB: We cannot carry this on much longer. I'm afraid we've gone too far already.

Enough of that. It suddenly occurred to me that I might find some background material about Paris in the first few issues of BLUE DEVIL, which Paris co-created with Dan Mishkin and Gary Cohn. Unfortunately, Editor Alan Gold must have been faced with a similar problem when he wrote those texts—there is nothing particularly illuminating about the elusive Mr. Cullins there. So, perhaps we should take another literary track, presenting "A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man" (with apologies to James Joyce, of course).

A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN

Once upon a time and a very good time it was there was an editor coming down along the hall and this editor that was coming down along the hall met a nice little artist named paris cullins...

His writer told him that story: his writer looked at him through the door: he had a hairy face.

Enough of that, too. Let's talk about Len Wein, shall we?

Len has had tenures as editor at both DC and Marvel and has co-created some of the most exciting

characters in comics today, namely *Swamp Thing* and the new *X-Men*. Len has been spending most of his recent time writing entries for WHO'S WHO, the book he edited through issue #13, and editing BATMAN and DETECTIVE COMICS. Len also plays on the DC softball team and is one of the three "old-timers" (along with inker Bob Smith and yours truly) who played in that fabled DC/Marvel game in 1976 when we wallowed there. (Len was one of "them" at the time, so he was included in the people who got wallowed.)

Okay, I suppose we'll all get tired of waiting for Paris to show up eventually. In fact, perhaps we'll have to begin a search for him. After all, Bob Rozakis the Production Manager (and a meaner guy DC's editors have never faced) will soon be yelling at editor Schwartz about the lateness of issue #1. Perhaps we shall sail the oceans in search of our artist, chronicling the adventures as (with apologies to Herman Melville):

MOBY PARIS

Call me Ishmael. Some years ago—never mind how long precisely—having little or no books in my department, and nothing particular to interest me on my desk, I thought I'd sail about and see the editorial part of the world. It is a way I have of driving off the spleen and regulating the circulation...

Don't complain about this text page, Julie. It could have been a lot worse. After all, instead of calling upon Laurie's background as an English professor, I could have drawn on my own accounting background and done a treatise on United States Tax Laws and their application to current accounting practices.

COMING NEXT ISSUE: Some advances comments about the origin of *Blue Beetle* that appeared in SECRET ORIGINS #2 (assuming I can get some copies of it out to regular readers before then. Aait stands now, the Gil Kane art for *that* hasn't arrived yet either! This is why Production Managers lose all their hair).

—Bob Rozakis